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POSITION PAPER  
UN Committee on the  
Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

ANNEX C

UNITED STATES MILITARY SPACE PROGRAMS  
and  
WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION IN OUTER SPACE

THE PROBLEM

The Soviet Union or other Bloc members may assert in the Outer Space Committee that the United States is seeking military domination in space and seeks to orbit space weapons. Public speculation in the United States and abroad regarding the extent and adequacy of United States military space efforts may be utilized to reinforce these allegations. Alleged United States programs may be contrasted, as they have been commonly in the past, with the "exclusively peaceful" nature of Soviet space activities. In addition to alleged "bombs-in-orbit" programs, the Soviets may seek to "illustrate" their suggestion of aggressive intent by referring to accounts of United States programs for the development of capabilities for satellite interception.

UNITED STATES POSITION

The United States should respond to such allegations in two general ways: (1) by reiterating our continued adherence to the United Nations doctrine of preserving the use of outer space only for the betterment of mankind, and specifically stating: (a) that the United

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States has no program to place weapons of mass destruction in orbit, and (b) that the United States has specifically suggested in its outline treaty for general and complete disarmament that nations should ~~conclude an agreement~~ <sup>agree</sup> not to harbor such weapons in outer space; and (2) by a positive effort to erode the effectiveness of Soviet public professions of comparative innocence and peacefulness; this may be done by (a) bringing to the attention of the Outer Space Committee Soviet statements seeking to use Soviet space activities to support claims of military (particularly ICBM) power; and (b) citing the danger posed by the secrecy with which the Soviet Union surrounds its outer space activities.

COMMENT

The United States has played a major role in the United Nations development of legal principles to guide states in the uses and exploration of outer space. The General Assembly has unanimously expressed its concern that outer space be utilized and explored "only for the betterment of mankind" (GA Resolution 1721 (XVI)). The principle is firmly established that outer space should be free for use by all in accordance with international law and not subject to national appropriation. Furthermore, members of the United Nations have agreed to "refrain from the use or threat of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations." (United Nations Charter, Article II, Paragraph 4) The United States continues to conduct its outer space activities in accordance with

these fundamental principles.

The United States believes that the arms race should not be extended into outer space. We have no program to place any weapons of mass destruction into orbit; we can only hypothesize that those who wrongly claim that the U.S. has such a program are seeking an excuse for the development of military space programs of their own. While seeking in every way to prevent the extension of the arms race into outer space, the U.S. will of course take such steps as are necessary to defend itself and its allies if and when the Soviet Union forces us to do so.

As a major step towards insuring that the arms race does not extend to outer space the United States has proposed that in the first stage of general and complete disarmament:

- (a) the placing into orbit or stationing in outer space of weapons of mass destruction shall be prohibited; and
- (b) States shall give advance notification to participating states and to the International Disarmament Organization of launchings of space vehicles and missiles, together with the track of the vehicle.

The United States hopes that the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee will give early and careful attention to this vital subject. It remains possible, through diligent efforts in that forum, to prevent the arms race from being extended into outer space. The United States will continue to seek that end.

The United States is conducting its national space program with the maximum openness consistent with national and international security. Extensive and detailed reports on the United States space science program are submitted annually to the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR). The UN request for

information on national space programs, enunciated in General Assembly Resolution 1721 (XVI) has been compiled with fully. Every U.S. space launching is registered with the United Nations. Millions of people around the world, by radio and television, have followed U.S. astronauts - from the pre-launch countdown to the landing. The comparative secrecy of the Soviet space program is clear; protestations of peaceful intent are no substitute for concrete information.

Indeed, what conclusions are we to draw when Soviet spokesmen combine their claims of peacefulness with suggestions that their outer space programs strengthen Soviet military capability? For example, Premier Khrushchev stated on 9 December 1961:

"There is now not a single plot of land where one could say that this land is safe, because now the means of delivering thermonuclear weapons are so powerful that they can be delivered to any spot on the globe. If we could send up Yuri Gagarin and German Titov, we could, of course, replace Yuri Gagarin and German Titov by other freight and land where we would like to land it."

(The TASS report said: "If we could bring the spaceships of Yuri Gagarin and German Titov to land at a prearranged spot, we could, of course, send up other "payloads" and "land" them wherever we wanted.")

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